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email: JoanM@mannapages.com

May 12, 1999

Re: Docket # 98N-1038,  
Irradiation in the Production, Processing, and Handling of Food"

To whom it may concern:

I am a mother of three young children and am trying to teach them the importance of eating right and making smart food choices. I have really appreciated the recent labeling laws that require food manufacturers to list all the ingredients of their products. This has greatly helped our ability to select foods that my children are not allergic to. I support the recommendation by the Center for Science in the Public Interest regarding labeling of irradiated foods as follows:

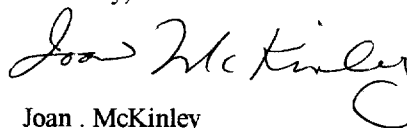
"Any foods, or any foods containing ingredients that have been treated by irradiation, should be labeled with a written statement on the principal display panel indicating such treatment. The statement should be easy to read and placed in close proximity to the name of the food and accompanied by the international symbol. If the food is unpackaged, this information should be clearly displayed on a poster in plain view and adjacent to where the product is displayed for sale."

Regarding the issue of labeling, in its initial petition, the FDA concluded that irradiation was a "material fact" about the processing of a food, and thus should be disclosed. The material fact remains; therefore, labeling should remain. Consumer acceptability, storage qualities and nutrients are affected. Some irradiated foods have different texture and spoilage characteristics than untreated foods. Most fruits and vegetables have nutrient losses that are not obvious or expected by the consumer.

In addition, processing by irradiation causes chemical changes that are not evident and are potentially hazardous. As a mother, I request that you give me the ability to choose whether I wish to feed my children irradiated foods. This technology is very new and the long range consequences of this technology have yet to be determined. The FDA's labeling requirement should NOT be permitted to expire.

I urge you to place the comments received on the Internet so that the public can be informed about who is participating in this comment process. You can call or email me at the numbers above to let me know where this is posted.

Sincerely,



Joan . McKinley

98N-1038

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